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Office of the Assistant Secretary/Spokesman

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For Immediate Release
2/4/92 TAKEN QUESTION

February 4, 1992

VENEZUELA: ATTEMPTED COUP

Q. What is the situation in Venezuela?

A. -- THE ATTEMPTED COUP IN VENEZUELA HAS FAILED. JUST BEFORE NOON, A CAPTURED COUP LEADER, COMMANDER HUGO CHAVEZ FRIAS, CALLED ON THE REBELS TO LAY DOWN THEIR ARMS. REBELS IN CARACAS AND MARACAIBO HAVE SURRENDERED. ISOLATED POCKETS OF REBELS REMAIN IN VALENCIA, SOUTHWEST OF CARACAS.

-- VENEZUELAN MEDIA REPORTED 54 CASUALTIES (DEAD AND WOUNDED) IN THE ATTEMPTED COUP.

-- THERE ARE SOME REPORTS OF SCATTERED LOOTING IN ONE SUBURB OF CARACAS. THE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORTS IN CARACAS AND MARACAIBO HAVE BEEN OPENED.

-- THE VENEZUELAN CONGRESS WAS SCHEDULED TO MEET LATER TODAY TO RATIFY THE TEN-DAY SUSPENSION OF CONSTITUTIONAL GUARANTEES COVERING LIBERTY OF TRANSIT AND FREEDOM TO ASSEMBLE, PROTEST AND STRIKE.

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